



**U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management**

Lakeview Resource Area
Lakeview District Office
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Lakeview, Oregon 97630-0055



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Hart Mountain National Antelope Refuge
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Lakeview, Oregon 97630

July 1998



Record of Decision for the Beaty Butte Allotment Management Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement

As the Nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has responsibility for most of our nationally owned public lands and natural resources. This includes fostering the wisest use of our land and water resources, protecting our fish and wildlife, preserving the environmental and cultural values of our national parks and historic places, and providing for the enjoyment of life through outdoor recreation. The Department assesses our energy and mineral resources and works to assure that their development is in the best interest of all our people. The Department also has a major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in Island Territories under U.S. Administration.

BLM/OR/WA/PL-98/029+1792

July 24, 1998

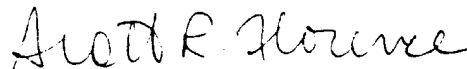
Dear Interested Public:

Enclosed for your review is the Record of Decision (ROD) for the Beatty Butte Allotment Management Plan (AMP) and Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS). The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has prepared this document in accordance with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 and the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969.

This AMP process is related to, but separate from another on-going proposal transferring management jurisdiction of the Shirk Ranch and other isolated parcels from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Management (USFWS) to the BLM and transferring management jurisdiction of parcels of BLM-administered lands within and outside of the allotment to the USFWS. The impacts of transferring jurisdiction are being analyzed in a separate planning process. However, the impacts of how transferred lands within the allotment would be managed following the transfer were evaluated in the AMP/FEIS. Due to the inter-relatedness of these actions, the USFWS is acting as a cooperating agency.

A public comment period was provided on the AMP/FEIS in June 1998. Several comments were received during this time. The attached ROD includes a discussion of how these comments were used in the preparation of this decision. Please review the attached ROD. If, for some reason, you wish to protest or appeal part or all of the decision, you must do so in accordance with the procedures described in the ROD. If you have questions concerning the AMP process, contact Mr. Dick Mayberry or Mr. Paul Whitman at (541) 947-2177. Thank you for your continued interest in the management of your public lands.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Scott Florence".

Scott Florence
Area Manager
Lakeview Resource Area

Enclosure, as stated

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Record of Decision for the Beaty Butte Allotment Management Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement

Introduction

An allotment management plan (AMP) is an activity level plan tiered to a broader land use plan. The Beaty Butte allotment (0600) does not currently have an allotment management plan (AMP). Grazing and other resource management is guided on the broad scale by the goals and objectives of the Warner Lakes Management Framework Plan (MFP) (BLM, 1983) and Lakeview Grazing Management Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS)/Record of Decision (ROD)(BLM, 1982a; 1982b). The Beaty Butte allotment includes approximately 506,985 acres of public land, and 37,380 acres of private land. Nearly 56% of the public land (283,900 acres) is located in Harney County and 44% (223,085 acres) is in Lake County. The allotment is located about 50 miles east of Lakeview, Oregon (Map 1).

An allotment evaluation was completed in December 1994 (BLM, 1994b) which recommended an allotment management plan be developed with specific plant community objectives, a grazing plan, and interdisciplinary monitoring to protect and enhance the other resources while continuing to graze the allotment at the current total number of AUMs of specified livestock grazing. The AMP/FEIS (BLM and USFWS, 1998) was prepared to specify resource goals and objectives for the allotment, formalize a grazing

management system, describe a monitoring/evaluation system to determine if management practices are meeting the stated goals/objectives, and identify projects needed to achieve management goals/objectives.

Alternatives, Including the Preferred Alternative

A total of 10 alternatives were considered during the preparation of the attached AMP (Appendix 1). Five alternatives were considered, but dropped from detailed analysis. These included reinstating suspended nonuse, retiring suspended nonuse, intensive development, present interim management, and a twelve-pasture, two-herd modified rest-rotation system. These five alternatives are described in greater detail in Section 2.2 - Alternatives Considered but Eliminated from Further Study, of the AMP/FEIS (BLM and USFWS, 1998).

Five other alternatives were considered and analyzed in detail. Alternatives (1-4) were designed in accordance with the existing land use plan as rest-rotation grazing systems whereby 26,121 AUMs would continue to be allocated to livestock grazing, 2,400 AUMs would continue to be allocated to wild horses, and 444 AUMs would continue to be allocated to wildlife. These four alternatives could be implemented with varying degrees of success under the guidance of the existing

land use plan. In contrast, Alternative 5 consists of removal of livestock grazing from the allotment, which is not consistent with the existing land use plan and would require the completion of a plan amendment and possible Congressional approval to implement. A brief summary description of each alternative is included below. A more detailed description of these alternatives can be found in Section 2.3 - Alternatives Completed in Detail, of the AMP/FEIS (BLM and USFWS, 1998).

Alternative 1 - No Action (Full Implementation of the MFP)

This alternative would consist of full implementation of the existing land use plan, as described in the Warner Lakes Management Framework Plan (MFP), Rangeland Program Summary, Record of Decision, Lakeview Grazing Management FEIS (BLM, 1982a; 1982b; 1983). This would include implementing a 13-pasture rest-rotation grazing system, about 72.3 miles of fence, and other range improvements as shown in Table 1 and Map 2 of the AMP/FEIS (BLM and USFWS, 1998). This alternative was included and analyzed as the baseline required by the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) for impact comparison purposes. Any portion of this alternative for livestock grazing related facilities or project proposals located in wilderness study areas (WSAs) would also have to meet the current Wilderness Interim Management Policy (BLM, 1995b).

Under current management by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), there is currently no authorized livestock use on the Shirk Ranch, but other small, isolated parcels of USFWS-administered lands

located south of the Hart Mountain National Antelope Refuge boundary are not currently fenced and would continue to be grazed along with BLM-administered lands in the allotment or would have to be fenced by the USFWS to exclude grazing.

Alternative 2 - Eleven Pasture System

This alternative involves completing some of the projects originally listed in the MFP with some additional projects (Tables 2 and 3; Appendices A and B; and Map 3 of the AMP/FEIS; BLM and USFWS, 1998) in order to implement a two-herd rest-rotation system. One herd would use a three-pasture rest-rotation grazing system in the east side area, with trail and drifting use in the Spaulding pasture, end of season use in Guano Lake pasture, or alternate year use in Hawk Valley pasture. The other herd would use a five-pasture system on the west side of the allotment.

Two new fences (approximately 30 miles) would be built to create the three pasture system in the east side (Map 3, projects "a" and "b" of the AMP/FEIS; BLM and USFWS, 1998). Fence locations shown on the maps are general locations. Actual siting would be within 0.5 mile of the shown location. These fences would create the North, Southeast and Southwest pastures. The Hawk Valley Seeding Pasture already exists. The rotation system would follow the schedule shown in Table 4 of the AMP/FEIS (BLM and USFWS, 1998). Under this grazing schedule, the cattle would always end the summer being herded to the west through the Spaulding pasture and into the Guano Lake pasture during the month of September before leaving the allotment in October. The schedule allows for the cattle to spend four

days trailing through the Spaulding pasture. Many of the cattle would be herded straight through to Guano Lake pasture and others would be dropped off and allowed to drift into Guano Lake pasture.

The second herd would use five pastures on the west side of the allotment. The existing Clove pasture would be incorporated into the grazing plan. Two new fences (approximately 9 miles) would be constructed. The current Jack Lake pasture would be divided into two pastures. The northern half of the new pasture would be used as a riparian pasture. Jack Creek pasture would also be divided into two pastures. The grazing schedule is outlined in Table 5 of the AMP/FEIS (BLM and USFWS, 1998). Every pasture on the west side would be completely rested one entire year during the five-year grazing cycle. The new Jack Lake Riparian pasture would be grazed early in the spring so that regrowth could occur and Guano Creek would have vegetative cover prior to the next spring runoff. One year out of five, the Jack Lake Riparian pasture would be grazed at the end of the season when the creek would be dry and cattle use would be light.

Alternative 3 - Current Management with Range Improvements

This alternative would consist of a two-pasture system in the east side with the north half being grazed one year while the south half was rested. The grazing would be reversed in the second year. Herding would substitute for fencing and would insure that different portions of the pasture were used throughout the season, allow deferment of grazing use in some areas, and allow regrowth after grazing in other

areas. The grazing schedule is shown in Table 6 of the AMP/FEIS (BLM and USFWS, 1998).

The projects would generally be the same as those listed under Alternative 2, except for the amount of fencing (about 12 miles) as shown on Map 4 and listed in Tables 3 and 7, and Appendices B and C of the AMP/FEIS (BLM and USFWS, 1998). The west side pastures would have the same grazing schedule as described in Table 5 of the AMP/FEIS (BLM and USFWS, 1998).

Alternative 4 - Jurisdictional Transfer (Preferred Alternative)

In most respects, this alternative would be very similar to Alternative 2, except the USFWS would acquire administrative jurisdiction of a portion of the Jack Lake Riparian pasture and manage that area in accordance with their existing land use plan (i.e. no grazing) (USFWS, 1994a; 1994b). The BLM would retain administrative jurisdiction of the rest of the pasture. That portion of the pasture north of the new fence, including Guano Creek pasture (project "A", Map 1) would also be excluded from livestock grazing. The BLM would acquire administrative jurisdiction of the Shirk Ranch and scattered portions of land currently administered by the USFWS within the Beaty Butte allotment. The scattered parcels of USFWS land transferred to BLM would be grazed in conjunction with BLM lands, as shown in Tables 2 and of the attached AMP (Appendix 1). The specific details of this jurisdictional transfer are currently being considered in a separate, but related joint-agency plan amendment/NEPA process. This plan

covers how the lands would be managed, should the transfer be completed.

The Shirk Ranch would be irrigated in the spring and grazed between August 1 and October 1 each year, to create a diversity of habitat structure suitable for waterfowl use. Up to 1,500 AUMs of forage may be grazed by livestock which would also serve to offset forage no longer available from Jack Lake Riparian and Guano Creek pastures. Additional fencing (about one mile; project "D", Map 1 of the attached AMP (Appendix 1) may be built to allow rotational grazing if monitoring shows the fence is necessary to meet objective 10. Any additional grazing use would be granted only if it benefits migratory bird habitat values (i.e. is needed to reach the desired average residual cover objective 10).

Alternative 5 - No Grazing

This alternative would remove livestock grazing from the public lands in the allotment. Grazing could continue on private lands. Wild horses would continue to be managed in accordance with the Beaty Butte HMA Plan (BLM, 1977). The projects under this alternative include the prescribed burns as outlined in Appendix A and shown on Map 3 of the AMP/FEIS (BLM and USFWS, 1998). Existing internal pasture boundary fences (see Map 1 of the AMP/FEIS; BLM and USFWS, 1998) would be removed. Existing spring developments and exclosures on public land would be maintained to exclude wild horse use from the riparian zone surrounding the water source while allowing use of water outside the exclosure.

Environmental Preferability of the Alternatives

Environmental preferability is judged using the criteria in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and subsequent guidance by the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ, 1981). The CEQ has defined the environmentally preferable alternative as the alternative that will promote the national environmental policy as expressed in Section 101 of the NEPA. This section lists six broad policy goals for all Federal plans, programs, and policies:

- 1) Fulfill the responsibilities of each generation as trustee of the environment for succeeding generations;
- 2) Assure for all Americans safe, healthful, productive, and aesthetically and culturally pleasing surroundings;
- 3) Attain the widest range of beneficial uses of the environment without degradation, risk to health or safety, or other undesirable and unintended consequences;
- 4) Preserve important historic, cultural, and natural aspects of our national heritage, and maintain, wherever possible, an environment which supports diversity and variety of individual choice;
- 5) Achieve a balance between population and resource use which will permit high standards of living and a wide sharing of life's amenities; and

6) Enhance the quality of renewable resources and approach the maximum attainable recycling of depletable resources.

Based on these criteria, identification of the most environmentally preferable alternative involves a balancing of current and potential resource uses with that of resource protection.

Alternative 1 could be viewed the least environmentally preferable as it offers the most intensive livestock use of the area, negatively impacts wilderness values and riparian zones, and is the most costly to implement.

Alternatives 2 and 4 are just about equal in terms of overall environmental preferability. Both alternatives provide more of a balance between beneficial uses and resource protection than do Alternatives 1 or 5. However, Alternative 4 would provide more protection or enhancement of riparian/wetland and upland habitats compared to Alternatives 1, 2, and 3, due to the removal of livestock grazing from Guano Creek pasture and a portion of the Jack Lake Pasture and management of the Shirk Ranch to meet wildlife management objectives. Alternatives 2 and 4 are just about equal in terms of cost of implementation.

Alternative 3 would be less environmentally preferable than Alternatives 2 and 4, but more preferable than Alternative 1. It offers similar beneficial uses as Alternatives 1, 2, and 4, but provides less control of impacts or less protection than Alternative 2, 4, or 5. It offers more protection than Alternative 1. It is less costly to implement than

Alternatives 1, 2, and 4, but is more costly than Alternative 5.

Alternative 5 would be more protective than Alternatives 1-4, but would also provide the fewest beneficial uses. Though it would be the least expensive alternative to implement, it is the only alternative that would result in a substantial economic loss to the local economy.

Given the need to balance the six CEQ goals, the BLM finds that Alternative 4 best meets the definition of the environmentally preferred alternative.

Management Considerations

The BLM is tasked with the job of multiple use management as mandated under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act and numerous other conflicting laws and regulations which govern the management of public lands. The selected AMP (Alternative 4; BLM and USFWS, 1998) provides a balance between those reasonable measures necessary to protect the existing resource values and the continued public need to make beneficial use of the area. Therefore, the implementation of the proposed AMP (Appendix 1) is the alternative best able to comply with all applicable laws, regulations, policy, and agency direction.

An allotment evaluation which was conducted in 1994 summarized the ecological site inventory data (ESI) that was collected in the late 1980's. The evaluation concluded that 86% of the allotment was in mid to late-seral stage with a static to upward trend at the time of the inventory. While some problem areas

exist, overall, the allotment is in good condition and has been improving under recent management.

It is acknowledged that the selected AMP (Appendix 1) represents a balanced compromise between various competing resource objectives so that the resources are utilized in the combination that will best meet the present and future needs of the American people. Given the constraints of 1) the size of the allotment, 2) the number, size, and location of existing WSAs, 3) and current and projected budgets, it represents a realistic management balance which is expected to move resource conditions in the allotment (and specifically in those areas needing improvement) towards the desired future conditions outlined in the goals and objectives of the AMP/FEIS (BLM and USFWS, 1998). Furthermore, the selected AMP (Appendix 1) could be modified to include additional projects to further enhance management of the area if some WSAs (or portions thereof) are released from wilderness study in the future.

The selected AMP (Appendix 1) further acknowledges that controlled livestock grazing is a valid and legitimate use over most of the area, while grazing would be excluded on nearly 24,000 acres of critical wildlife habitat (approximately 4% of the allotment), including the Guano Creek riparian corridor.

The allotment was assessed for compliance with the applicable Standards for Rangeland Health (BLM, 1997) prior to completion of this ROD. This assessment is included as Appendix 2. Implementing the selected AMP will meet the requirement in 43 CFR 4180 for the

authorized officer to take appropriate action where livestock grazing is a significant factor for not meeting, or for not making significant progress toward meeting, a particular Rangeland Health Standard.

Implementation

The implementation of the AMP will occur over a number of years and begin with incorporation of the AMP (Appendix 1) as terms and conditions of a new 10-year grazing permit. The actual rate of implementation will be tied to the BLM's budget process and other funding sources such as permittee contributions. Priorities for management are developed through long-term budgeting processes and in consultation with other agencies, tribes, and government bodies. Project implementation is discussed further in the attached AMP (Appendix 1).

It is anticipated that the proposed livestock management related facilities and projects associated with and analyzed as part of the AMP (Appendix 1) are adequately addressed with enough site-specificity within the Draft and Final AMP/EISs (BLM and USFWS, 1997; 1998) associated with this Record of Decision as to require no additional National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documentation prior to implementation. However, some actions could require the preparation of supplemental or separate NEPA analysis prior to implementation due to changing conditions, new information, or other reasons. Future legal or regulatory requirements or other directives will be incorporated into the AMP, where appropriate, as implementation occurs. Cultural and botanical surveys will be

conducted, where needed, prior to construction of ground-disturbing projects, as stated in the Mitigation and Monitoring section below. AMP implementation progress will be reported in the Lakeview District's *Planning Update*.

Mitigation and Monitoring

All protective measures identified in the "Project Implementation Criteria and Mitigation" section of the AMP (Appendix 1) will be taken to avoid or mitigate adverse impacts throughout the plan implementation. All practical means to avoid or reduce environmental harm will be adopted, monitored, and periodically evaluated, as appropriate.

Monitoring will be conducted as identified in the "Monitoring" section of the AMP (Appendix 1). Monitoring and periodic allotment evaluations will be used to ensure that the plan is being implemented, progress is being made towards meeting the plan goals and objectives, and that mitigation is proving effective.

Public Involvement, Agency and Tribal Consultation

Opportunities to Date

A detailed account of the amount and outcome of the public involvement and consultation process is contained in Section 1.3 - Conformance with Federal, State, Local, and Tribal Land Use Plans and Policies, Section 1.4 - Public Comments, and Chapter 5 - Consultation and Public Input Opportunities of the AMP/FEIS (BLM and USFWS, 1998).

The Oregon Natural Desert Association

and 21 other organizations submitted a proposal to designate a large portion of the Beaty Butte allotment as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) while the AMP/FEIS was in the process of being published. Therefore, this issue was not discussed within the AMP/FEIS. A brief discussion of how this issue will be addressed is included in the Managers' Decisions section below.

Another issue that arose while the AMP/FEIS was out for review, is a proposal by the USFWS to relocate part of the existing Sheldon National Antelope Refuge boundary fence immediately north of Highway 140 within the Oregon Department of Transportation Highway Right-of-Way. The Lakeview District is supportive of this proposal, but approval rests with the Oregon Department of Transportation. The location of this proposed fence was added to Map 1. Placement of this fence in this location would remove livestock grazing from about 4,000 acres of the allotment and improve safety along this stretch of Highway 140. Gates would be placed in appropriate places and left open to allow horse movement when cattle are not in the southwest pasture.

Comments on AMP/FEIS

A 30-day public review of the AMP/FEIS began on June 19, 1998, the date the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency published its Notice of Availability of the AMP/FEIS in the *Federal Register*. This review period closed on July 20, 1998.

During the public review period, a total of 5 letters were received from the US Environmental Protection Agency, Oregon

Natural Resources Council, Elaine Rees, Toiyabe Chapter of the Sierra Club, and South Eugene Hiking Club. The main issues presented include: the cost of implementing range improvement projects; whether impacts of project "p" (a waterhole) were adequately analyzed; reallocation of forage; designation of an ACEC; livestock grazing on the portion of Guano Slough in the Hart Mountain National Antelope Refuge; impacts to wilderness values; and adequacy of the economic analysis.

The U.S. Environmental Protection agency stated that the AMP/FEIS adequately addressed all of their concerns related to the draft document.

Public comments on the AMP/FEIS are available for viewing in the Lakeview District office during normal working hours.

Managers' Decisions

Having considered the full range of alternatives and associated impacts, conducted an assessment of compliance with the Standards for Rangeland Health (BLM, 1997; Appendix 2), our decision is to adopt and implement Alternative 4, as described herein and in the attached AMP (Appendix 1), contingent upon the resolution of any protests or appeals, and approval of the jurisdictional transfer of lands between the BLM and the USFWS described under Alternative 4. If the transfer of lands is delayed or not approved, the AMP will be implemented as described under Alternative 2, which is identical to Alternative 4, except for the land transfer. All other aspects of this decision are in full conformance with

existing land use plan decisions.

Because the decision represents a collection of a variety of management actions that are not entirely related to grazing management, the decision has been separated into those actions which are protestable or appealable under the grazing management regulations (43 CFR 4160.2) and those which are appealable under general land management regulations (43 CFR 4).

Proposed Grazing Management Decision

In accordance with 43 CFR 4160.2, it is our proposed decision to implement, over time, construction of the new pasture fences, exclosures, livestock watering facilities, cattleguards, Hawk Valley Seeding burn and reseed project (projects "a-m" and "p-r", Map 1), and maintenance of existing and future grazing related facilities, as part of the implementation of a rest-rotation grazing system, as described in the attached AMP (Appendix 1), as funding and staff are available.

However, because of potential impacts to wilderness values, the fence creating the Southwest and Southeast Pastures (project "a", Map 1) will not be constructed until such time as: 1) one or more of the affected WSAs or portions thereof are released from further study, or 2) the wilderness interim management policy is revised. The Potholes exclosure fence (project "q", Map 1) will only be constructed if implementation of the rest-rotation grazing system is not effective in meeting riparian goals/objectives of the AMP (Appendix 1).

In accordance with 43 CFR 4160.2, the

permittees or other interested publics may protest those portions of the proposed decision described above under 43 CFR 4160.1 in writing within 15 days from receipt of this proposed decision at this address:

Bureau of Land Management
Lakeview District Office
1000 South 9th Street
P.O. Box 151
Lakeview, Oregon 97630

Any protest should specify the reasons clearly and concisely why the proposed decision is in error.

In the absence of a protest in the time allowed, this proposed decision shall constitute the final grazing management decision, without further notice. Should this proposed decision become the final grazing management decision and you wish to appeal this decision for the purpose of a hearing before an Administrative Law Judge, in accordance with 43 CFR 4.470 and 43 CFR 4160.4, you are allowed 45 days from receipt of this notice in which to file such appeal in writing with the Area Manager at the above address. The appeal should specify the reasons, clearly and concisely as to why you consider this grazing management decision to be in error. Any request for a stay of this final decision must be filed with the appeal in accordance with 43 CFR 4.21 as described in the "Request for Stay" section below.

Final General Land Management Decision

It is our final decision to implement, over time, the prescribed burns (projects 1-16, Map 1) and the erosion control measures

(project "o", Map 1), as described in the attached AMP (Appendix 1), to protect resource values and improve ecosystem health, as funding and staff are available.

Any party adversely affected by this final decision (projects 1-16, and project "o", Map 1) may appeal within 30 days of receipt of the decision in accordance with the provisions of 43 CFR Parts 4.4. The appeal must include a statement of reasons or file a separate statement of reasons within 30 days of filing the appeal. The appeal must state if a stay of the decision is being requested in accordance with 43 CFR 4.21 and must be filed with the Area Manager, at the address above. A copy of the appeal, statement of reasons, and all other supporting documents should be sent to the Regional Solicitor, Pacific Northwest Region, U.S. Department of the Interior, Lloyd 500 Building, Suite 607, 500 N.E. Multnomah Street, Portland, OR 97232. If the statement of reasons is filed separately it must be sent to the Interior Board of Land Appeals, Office of Hearings and Appeals, 4015 Wilson Boulevard, Arlington, VA 22203. It is suggested that any appeal be sent certified mail, return receipt requested.

Request for Stay

Should you wish to file a motion for stay pending the outcome of an appeal of either the proposed grazing management decision or the final general land management decision described above, you must show sufficient justification based on the following standards under 43 CFR 4.21 and 4.470:

- (1) The relative harm to the parties if the stay is granted or denied.

- (2) The likelihood of the appellant's success on the merits.
- (3) The likelihood of immediate and irreparable harm if the stay is not granted.
- (4) Whether the public interest favors granting the stay.

As noted above, the motion for stay must be filed in the office of the authorized officer.

Issues Outside of the Scope of the Decisions Being Made

This decision does not address forage allocation, special management area designations (including ACEC/RNA designations), or wild horse herd management areas as those types of issues are beyond the scope of the AMP development and will be addressed during future land use planning efforts. The Lakeview Resource Area is currently in the process of evaluating a number of areas within the allotment for ACEC potential and will be documenting these findings in preparation for a Resource Management Plan. An inter-District evaluation of the recently nominated Pronghorn ACEC has been initiated and will be included in this documentation process. Nothing in this decision precludes the potential for future ACEC designations in the Beaty's Butte area. Further, the management direction contained in the attached AMP (Appendix 1) is found to serve as appropriate temporary management (as outlined in BLM Manual 1613.21E) to protect potential significant, resource/ACEC values from degradation until such time as an ACEC evaluation and Resource Management Plan or Plan Amendment can be completed to address ACEC issues.

Record of Decision for the Beaty Butte Allotment Management Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement

Scott R. Florence
Scott R. Florence
Lakeview Resource Area Manager

7/24/98
Date

Steven A. Ellis
Steven A. Ellis
District Manager, Lakeview District

7/24/98
Date

Michael L. Nunn
Michael L. Nunn
Manager, Hart Mountain National Antelope Refuge

7/24/98
Date

Appendix 1 - Approved Allotment Management Plan

Goals and Objectives

The following is a list of goals and objectives based on comments received from the general public and the Beaty Butte working group, and MFP decisions that apply specifically to the Beaty Butte allotment.

Goals

- 1) Provide a diversity of vegetation and plant communities across the landscape in uplands, riparian, and wetland areas.
- 2) Maintain or enhance habitats for sensitive plant and animal species.
- 3) Provide adequate ground cover to minimize soil erosion from wind and water.
- 4) Continue current economic and traditional uses of the allotment at sustainable levels.
- 5) Maintain or enhance consumptive and nonconsumptive recreational uses.
- 6) Maintain and respect Native American traditional uses in the allotment.

Objectives

- 1) Within ten years of making the final decision: a) at least 80% of the riparian/wetland zones are in Proper Functioning Condition (as defined in BLM Technical References 1737-9 (1993) and 1737-11 (1994c)). All riparian zones (ie, seeps, springs and streams) and wetlands will be included; and b) No more than a total of 20% of major intermittent and perennial stream banks will

have active bank cutting at the end of 10 years following signing of the plan.

(Objective 1 addresses goal statements 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6).

If this objective is met, then riparian areas would provide a diversity of vegetation communities and structure for wildlife habitat, to minimize erosion, and provide water for livestock and wild horses.

Riparian and wetland areas are important to a variety of uses including fishing and camping, and watering wildlife, livestock and wild horses, and have been raised as an issue in the scoping process.

- 2) Provide a Potential Natural Vegetation Community (PNC) on at least 25% of the area in the Hawk Mountain #1 and Hawk Mountain #2 proposed RNAs within 10 years of the final decision, and maintain the remaining area in the two Proposed RNAs in a late seral vegetation community.

(Objective 2 addresses goal statements 1, 2, and 3).

The PNC would consist mostly of grasses and forbs with about 15-25 percent of the annual vegetative production from shrubs (about 65-75% of the annual vegetative production would be from grasses, 5-35% from forbs, and 15-25% from shrubs). A good understory of grasses and forbs would be maintained in a late seral community, but shrubs may become a more predominant component than in the PNC. At the time of the Ecological Site Inventory in 1988, 94% of the proposed RNA was in late seral stage, and 6% was

mid-seral.

If this objective is met, there would be an increase in the grass and forb component and a decrease in the shrub component in the proposed Hawk Mountain #1 and Hawk Mountain #2 Research Natural Areas (RNAs). Some manipulation of the shrub component would be needed to accomplish the objective.

- 3) Trend toward the Potential Natural Community at the Sink Lakes Proposed RNA. In 1996, a nested plot frequency transect was established in the vernal lake area in the upland low sagebrush area to determine the ecological trend for that plant community. Additional study sites may be established when the water subsides in the vernal lake.

(Objective 3 addresses goal statements 1, 2, and 3).

- 4) Provide a Potential Natural Vegetation Community (PNC) on at least 25% of the area in the proposed RNA within 10 years of the final decision, provide continuation of the functioning condition of lower Guano Creek and protect the two Bureau sensitive plant species that occur there.

(Objective 4 addresses goal statements 1, 2, and 3).

The PNC would consist of a good understory of grasses and forbs; and shrubs would be in balance within a mid-seral community. At the time of the Ecological Site Inventory in 1988, 90% of the proposed RNA (Wyoming big sagebrush/Thurber's needle and thread

grass), was in poor condition (early seral stage). The remaining 10% of the proposed RNA (Wyoming big sagebrush/bluebunch wheatgrass) was in good condition (mid-seral stage). The sensitive plant species occur on outcrops of ashflow and very few other plants occur on these nutrient poor soils. No activity would take place by humans that would change that balance; and the area would be monitored to see that exotic plants do not become established that would constitute a threat. The Bureau Sensitive plants have been monitored and would continue to be monitored to see that their numbers do not decrease, nor would plant habitat be degraded. Guano Creek, within the proposed RNA was found to be in Proper Functioning Condition in the summer of 1996. If this objective is met, there would be an increase in the grass and forb component and a decrease in the shrub component in the proposed Guano Creek Research Natural Area (RNA). Some manipulation of the shrub component may be needed to accomplish the objective.

- 5) Maintain a big sagebrush canopy cover of less than 20% on more than half of the big sagebrush range site area. The remaining big sagebrush range site area could have greater than 20% canopy cover.

(Objective 5 addresses goal statements 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6).

In 1988, about 65% of the big sagebrush site area had a canopy cover of less than 20%.

- 6) Increase the native perennial grass and forb component and decrease the sagebrush and rabbitbrush component on about 70,000 acres of big sagebrush range sites.

(Objective 6 addresses goal statements 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6).

Big sagebrush range sites (including Basin big sagebrush, Wyoming big sagebrush, and mountain big sagebrush) occupy about 355,000 acres of the allotment.

- 7) Improve the plant community from mid-seral to late seral on 25,000 acres of low sage sites within 10 years of signing the plan. Increase the grass and forb component and decrease the shrub component. Communities on these areas should consist of 30-40% grass, 15-25% forbs, and 35-45% shrubs composition by weight.

(Objective 7 addresses goal statements 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6).

- 8) Maintain early or mid-seral condition on 52,000 acres of the low sage vegetation communities within 10 years of signing the decision. Communities should consist of 20-30% grass, 10-20% forbs, and 40-60% shrubs composition by weight.

(Objective 8 addresses goal statements 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6).

- 9) Maintain late seral or potential natural community on 71,000 acres of low sage communities within 10 years of signing the decision. Plant communities on these areas should consist of at least 30-40% grass, 15-25% forbs, and no more than 35-45% shrubs composition by weight.

(Objective 9 addresses goal statements 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6).

Low sage range sites occupy about 148,000 acres of the allotment. In 1988, about 71,000 acres of this range site were in late seral or potential natural community. In 1988, about 76,000 acres of the low sage site area were in early or mid-seral stages.

- 10) Provide vegetation utilization levels at the Shirk Ranch that would encourage migratory waterfowl use. Utilization level objectives for the Shirk Ranch are:

1. Residual cover heights 12"+ on 30% of the area;
2. Residual cover heights 6" - 11" on 40% of the area;
3. Residual cover heights 1" - 5" on 30% of the area.

(Objective 10 addresses goal statements 1, 2, and 3).

Selected AMP - Alternative 4 (Jurisdictional Transfer)

This plan involves completing the projects listed in the "Project List" section to implement a two-herd, rest-rotation system, protect other resource values, and improve ecosystem health. On the east side one herd would use seven pastures with only trailing and drifting use occurring in the Spaulding pasture. On the west side another herd would use a six-pasture system (Map 1). Shirk Ranch and Guano Lake pastures would be used by both herds.

In most respects, the selected plan is similar to Alternative 2 (as described in the AMP/FEIS; BLM and USFWS, 1998), except the USFWS would acquire administrative jurisdiction of a portion of the Jack Lake pasture (about 9,461 acres) and manage that area in accordance with

their existing land use plan (i.e. no grazing) (USFWS, 1994a; 1994b). The BLM would retain administrative jurisdiction of the rest of the pasture. However, that portion of the pasture north of the new fence (project "A", Map 1), including Guano Creek pasture (approximately 11,020 acres) would be managed cooperatively by the USFWS under the guidelines of their existing land use plan and would also be excluded from livestock grazing.

The BLM would acquire administrative jurisdiction of the Shirk Ranch and scattered portions of land currently administered by the USFWS within the Beaty Butte allotment (about 3,767 acres). Those parcels of USFWS land transferred to BLM would be grazed in conjunction with other BLM lands in the allotment. (The specific details of this jurisdictional transfer are currently being analyzed in a separate, but related joint-agency plan amendment/NEPA process). Adoption of this plan assumes the transfer will be completed and it covers how the lands involved in the proposed transfer, in or adjacent to the Beaty Butte allotment would be managed. Livestock use would not be authorized in the lower Guano Creek area (Guano Creek Pasture; Map 1), even if the transfer did not occur because of special status plant management goals and to protect riparian habitat.

The following discussion is organized as to how livestock grazing will be managed on the east and west sides of the allotment, including Shirk Ranch.

East Side Herd/Pastures

The implementation of this system would take several years because of the cost and scope of the projects. A summary of the east side projects needed to implement this

AMP is included in Table 1.

Two new fences will be built to create the three pasture system in the east side. Two new pastures will be created in the southern part of the east side by building a fence from Highway 140 at the Oregon/Nevada state line north to South Corral Spring, then on to a fence passing through Buckaroo Pass (Map 1, project "b"). Another fence would be built through Buckaroo Pass from the northeast corner of the Spaulding Pasture to an unnamed butte north of Shallow Lake (Map 1, project "a"). This fence would be about 11 miles long and would divide the north from the south. Fence locations shown on the maps are general locations. Actual siting would be within 0.5 mile of the shown location. These fences would create the North, Southeast and Southwest pastures. The Hawk Valley Seeding pasture already exists.

The rotation system would follow the schedule shown in Table 2. Until fence "b" is built, herders would be used to rotate cattle use. Under this grazing schedule, the cattle would always end the summer being herded to the west through the Spaulding pasture and into the Guano Lake pasture during the month of September before leaving the allotment in October. The schedule allows for the cattle to spend four days trailing through the Spaulding pasture. Many of the cattle would be herded straight through to Guano Lake pasture and others would be dropped off and allowed to drift into Guano Lake pasture. Herders would also be needed to

Table 1 - East Side Project Summary

Fence miles	Springs No.	Pipeline miles	New Reservoirs No.	Rebuilt Reservoirs No.	Prescribed Burning Acres	Prescribed Burn and Seed Acres
30	0	5	2	3	79.900	6500

distribute cattle use in the Southeast and Southwest pastures, to rotate use in the North pasture, to move cattle between pastures (trailing), keep cattle inside designated areas, and keep cattle out of sensitive areas.

West Side Herd/Pastures

The second herd would use six pastures on the west side of the allotment. Implementation of this system would take several years because of the cost and scope of the projects. A summary of the west side projects needed to implement this AMP is included in Table 3.

The existing Clove pasture would be incorporated into the Beaty Butte grazing plan. A fence would be constructed south of Guano Creek, dividing the current Jack Lake pasture into two areas. The northern half will be excluded from grazing, provided the jurisdictional transfer is completed. If the transfer is not completed, this area will be used as a riparian pasture. Jack Creek pasture would be divided into two pastures with an east-west fence in the middle of the existing pasture. The result would be a six-pasture, rest-rotation system. Implementation of this plan would require the use of herders to move cattle between pastures (trailing) and keep cattle out of sensitive areas. The grazing schedule is outlined in Table 4.

The following parameters were used in developing this grazing schedule: 1) every pasture on the west side with early season use will be completely rested one entire year during the five-year grazing cycle, 2) the schedule is designed to make rotation of the cattle as simple as possible to increase the success of the rotation, 3) the Clove pasture will not be grazed at the end of the season because the water sources in this pasture typically dry up by then, and 4) if the jurisdictional transfer is not completed, the Jack Lake Riparian pasture will be grazed early in the spring so that regrowth could occur and Guano Creek will have vegetative cover present for

the next spring runoff. One year out of five, the Jack Lake Riparian pasture will be grazed at the end of the season. At that time of the year, the creek will be dry and cattle use in the creek would be light. An average end of season stubble height of six inches at key sites along Guano Creek is expected after grazing.

Table 2. Eastside Pastures Grazing Schedule (East Side Herd)

PASTURE	YEAR			
	1	2	3	4
NORTH^{1/}	April 1 - August 31, rotate around Beaty Butte in a counter-clockwise direction; 3,500 cows (16,000-19,000 AUMS) ^{1/} .	REST	April 1 - August 31, rotate around Beaty Butte in a counter-clockwise direction; 3,500 cows (16,000-19,000 AUMS) ^{1/} .	REST
SOUTHWEST	REST	April 1 - June 15; 3,000 cows (7,000 -8,000 AUMS) ^{2/} .	REST	June 15 - August 31; 3,500 cows (4,500-6,500 AUMS) ^{3/} .
SOUTHEAST	REST	June 15 - August 31; 3,500 cows (4,500-6,500 AUMS) ^{3/} .	REST	April 1 - June 15; 3,000 cows (7,000-8,000 AUMS) ^{2/} .
HAWK VALLEY SEEDING	REST	April 1 - May 30; 500 cows (1,000 AUMS).	REST	April 1 - May 30; 500 cows (1,000 AUMS).
SPAULDING	April 1-30, trail use; 3,500 cows for 2 days (250 AUMS). August 1 - October 1, drifting use averaging 4 days (500 AUMS).	Same as year 1.	Same as year 1.	Same as year 1.
SHIRK RANCH	August 1- September 30; (1,000 AUMS) ^{4/} .	Same as year 1.	Same as year 1.	Same as year 1.
GUANO LAKE	August 1 - October 30 (no more than 30 days); 3,500 cows (3,000 AUMS).	Same as year 1.	Same as year 1.	Same as year 1.

^{1/} There is a range of AUMS to cover the variability in precipitation, which is what determines if the cattle come off in early August or late August.

^{2/} The range in AUMS covers the variation in turnout time which is dependent on the weather.

^{3/} The range in AUMS covers variation in the rotation time which will be effected by the weather, the condition of the vegetation, and the amount of water available in each pasture.

^{4/} The grazing period shown represents a range of time in which the cattle may be in the pasture. The actual utilization levels or AUM level would determine the actual length of grazing time in any given year.

Table 3. West Side Project Summary

Fences Miles	Springs No.	Pipelines Miles
9-10	1	2

Table 4. West Pasture Grazing Schedule (West Side Herd - 500 Cows)

PASTURE	YEAR			
	1	2	3	4
JACK LAKE SOUTH	May 1 - June 20 (800 AUMS).	July 1 - August 10 (650 AUMS).	REST	April 1 - May 20 (800 AUMS).
CORRAL LAKE	June 20 - August 10 (800 AUMS).	May 15 - July 1 (750 AUMS).	May 1 - June 20 (800 AUMS.)	REST
JACK CREEK SOUTH	REST	April 1- May 15 (750 AUMS).	June 20 - August 10 (800 AUMS).	June 20 - August 10 (800 AUMS).
CLOVE	April 1- 30 (500 AUMS).	REST	April 1- 30 (500 AUMS).	May 20 - June 20 (500 AUMS).
SHIRK RANCH ^{1/}	August 10 - September 30 (500 AUMS).	Same as year 1.	Same as year 1.	Same as year 1.
GUANO LAKE	September 10 - October 30 (500 AUMS).	Same as year 1.	Same as year 1.	Same as year 1.

^{1/} The grazing period shown represents a range of time in which the cattle may be in the pasture. The actual utilization levels or AUM level would determine the actual length of grazing time in any given year.

Shirk Ranch

The Shirk Ranch will be irrigated in the spring and grazed by both herds between August 1 and October 1, each year, with the objective of creating a diversity of habitat structure suitable for waterfowl use. Up to 1,500 AUM's of forage may be grazed by livestock which would also serve

to offset forage no longer available from Jack Lake Riparian and Guano Creek pastures due to exclusion from grazing. Additional fencing (about one mile) (project "D", Map 1) may be built to allow rotational grazing on the Shirk Ranch if monitoring shows the fence is necessary to meet objective 10. Additional grazing use will be granted only if it benefits migratory

bird habitat values (i.e. is needed to reach the desired average residual cover objective 10). Initially, some of the water for irrigation of the ranch may be provided from Jacob's Reservoir. However, should the dam at Jacobs Reservoir be removed by the USFWS, another impoundment or pumping facility at Shirk Lake will have to be constructed to provide irrigation water for the Shirk Ranch wetlands. The feasibility of this is currently in question. Should such a proposal prove to be feasible in the future, an additional NEPA document will have to be prepared to analyze the potential impacts.

If the jurisdictional transfer is not completed, the Shirk Ranch will be managed in accordance with the existing land use plan for the Hart Mountain National Antelope Refuge (USFWS, 1994a; 1994b), as described under Alternative 2 of the AMP/FEIS (BLM and USFWS, 1998).

Monitoring and Evaluation

Information will be collected using the monitoring techniques described below. The information will be used to evaluate whether or not the objectives described above are being achieved. The evaluation will be conducted ten years after the final decision by an interdisciplinary team and will include consultation with all interested parties. If adjustments in management are needed, these will be made in accordance with applicable regulations. The type of information that will be collected is: precipitation data, actual use by livestock, utilization of forage, changes in vegetative composition, vegetative cover, sensitive plant population changes, streambank stability, and Proper Functioning Condition of riparian and lentic areas. Wildlife

populations will continue to be monitored by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW). The species monitored are mule deer, pronghorn, and Western sage grouse. Small mammal and California bighorn sheep surveys are conducted periodically by the ODFW. The BLM will continue to conduct periodic raptor surveys.

Precipitation and temperature data will be collected using the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) reports for the Hart Mountain reporting station and the Remote Automated Weather Station (RAWS) data collected at Fish Fin Rim. Precipitation data is available from the Acty Mountain rain gauge from the State Watermaster in Lakeview. This data will be used to determine growing conditions when evaluating whether or not management is meeting objectives.

Actual use by livestock will be collected at the end of each grazing season from the permittees. Number and kind of livestock, dates of use by pasture, and observations made by permittees will be included on the form. After the fact billing privileges are based on promptly returning accurate information to the BLM for use in evaluating grazing management.

Annual utilization measurements and mapping will continue for both cattle and wild horse use. The amount and timing of the horse utilization monitoring will be determined by where the cattle are grazing each year. In the rested areas, the horse use monitoring will be done once a year at the end of the growing season. In the areas being used by cattle, the horse monitoring will be done twice a year (spring and fall). The detailed methods and monitoring schedule can be found in

the Wild Horse Utilization Monitoring Plan/Schedule, Beaty Butte Herd Management Area (BLM, 1994d) which is on file in the Lakeview Resource Area Office.

Annual cattle utilization monitoring will be done in grazed areas the cattle leave the area. Utilization will be determined using the Landscape Appearance Method (BLM, 1996a) and a utilization pattern map will be developed to illustrate the amount of cattle use across the pasture.

At the Shirk Ranch, residual cover heights will be measured as described in BLM (1996b) immediately upon livestock removal. After 5 years of monitoring data has been collected, the grazing use will be compared to the desired residual cover levels in objective 10 and adjustments in grazing use at the Shirk Ranch will be made as necessary.

Ecological trend data will continue to be collected at the 26 established study sites. All 26 sites have established photo points; 13 of the sites have established step-toe transects; and 5 of the sites have nested plot frequency transects established. The collection of range ecological trend data will continue using the 26 established photo points and reading the 13 step-toe transects and the 5 nested frequency transects using standard methods (BLM, 1996b). The studies will be conducted every three to five years to collect data to evaluate the ecological trend in the allotment. Vegetative inventories in the Proposed RNAs are being initiated for the future RMP. Also, data will be collected in approximately 10 years to compare to the data collected in 1988 Ecological Site Inventory (ESI) to determine the seral stage of the plant communities. Plant

community descriptions for the Potential Natural Community for each range site are located in the Lakeview District office. The location of the 1988 sites and description of the methodology is also available at the Lakeview District Office.

A nested plot frequency transect will be established in the vernal lakebed site to determine the ecological trend in this plant community. A nested plot frequency transect was established in the upland range site in the Sink Lake PRNA to determine the ecological trend for that plant community. Additional study sites may be established to monitor trend and evaluate if goals and objectives are being met.

To evaluate objective one, the riparian and lentic habitats will be evaluated using the Proper Functioning Condition methodology (BLM, 1993; 1994c), and the Ochoco Bottom Line Survey Methodology for cut banks. Cut banks in the Ochoco Bottom Line Survey methodology are defined as active erosional surfaces, at least six inches high, that contribute fine sediment to the stream and have slopes greater than 45%. It is not considered a cut bank unless all of these criteria are met. In addition, if the banks have greater than 50% vegetative cover, they are considered stable. The riparian zones will be evaluated approximately every 5 years to detect any change.

To evaluate objectives two through nine, the trend studies described above will be used to indicate changes in the vegetation community. As detectable changes in frequency of occurrence of key species occur, several Ecological Site Inventory vegetation transects will be done to determine actual change in the plant

community compared to the 1988 Inventory. In 1996, a nested plot frequency transect was established in the vernal lake area in the upland low sagebrush area to determine the ecological trend for that plant community. Additional study sites may be established when the water subsides in the vernal lake.

The ESI inventory method will be used to determine the effectiveness of the prescribed burns. ESI transects established in the 1988 survey will be repeated about five years on those range sites within the prescribed burn areas that have existing transects. These transects will be done to determine if the composition of the vegetation has achieved the objectives. In the range sites within the prescribed burns that did not have actual ESI transects, transects will be run prior to the prescribed fire to establish a baseline. About five years after the burn, the transect will be run again to determine if the vegetation objectives are being met. Pre-and post fire management will include monitoring of plant communities and cultural plants.

The existing populations of the two plants with BLM sensitive species status are currently monitored every year to determine if there are any changes in the population status. This monitoring will continue. The grimey ivesia studies were initiated in 1990, and the Crosby's buckwheat transects were initiated in 1995. The methodology for the grimey ivesia includes counting and measuring all individual plants. For the Crosby's buckwheat, two transects involving density photo plots and frequency transects have been counted for several years. If any known existing population of a BLM sensitive status plant declines by 10 percent or more in any given year, the

BLM will determine the cause of the change and consult appropriately on needed changes in management. A Conservation Agreement with the USFWS is currently being written for the sensitive plant species. Monitoring methodologies will be evaluated during this effort and may be amended to better reflect changes in plant population dynamics.

Transects will be established and measured during the growing season to determine the diversity and vigor of culturally used plants. Transects will be established in consultation with tribal groups. If practical, these transects will be associated with existing trend study sites.

Management Flexibility

The grazing permit defines the parameters (number and kind of livestock, season of use, and terms and conditions for livestock grazing) within which livestock use may occur, and normally authorizes use for a ten-year period. The annual authorization or operating plan describes the use that will occur in a particular grazing season. The flexibility described in this section may be exercised by the permittee without additional authorization from the BLM. Any changes in use beyond the flexibility described herein must first be authorized by the BLM.

Because of the size of the allotment and the varying weather conditions that can occur from year to year, the grazing schedule is flexible and capable of adjustment. The permittees will not turnout prior to the date on the grazing permit, but may go into the first use pasture up to five days before the specified date on the annual operating plan. This will compensate for changes in the weather

and provide the flexibility necessary to organize the transport of cattle.

A year with extreme variation in weather may also require that changes in the annual operating plan (such as pasture rotation schedule) be made to either insure adequate water for the livestock or to provide additional rest to an area. Wildfire or prescribed burns could also result in a change in the grazing schedule to provide the necessary rest for fine fuel buildup prior to burning or vegetative recovery after burning. Any changes requested will need to be approved by the BLM, be conducted in accordance with BLM regulations, and have an underlying goal of reaching the AMP objectives.

Project Implementation Criteria and Mitigation

Range Developments

Fence line delineations shown on Map 1 will be subject to possible minor adjustments based on the results of botanical and cultural resource clearances or to mitigate wildlife passage needs. Fences near or within Wilderness Study Areas (WSA) will be located to minimize visual impacts to the WSA. Fences will be constructed to BLM spacing standards (BLM, 1985a; BLM and Forest Service, 1988) within those antelope and deer use areas identified in the Lakeview Grazing Management EIS (BLM, 1982a) and could include (but is not limited to) such designs as: temporary electric fences, letdown fences, and smooth wire fences.

To prevent excess water from being drawn away from the water source/riparian zone, floats will be installed on water troughs associated with pipelines, where necessary.

In addition, pipelines may be shut off when cattle are not in the area, unless it is determined that wild horse or wildlife use requires that water be provided.

Prescribed Burns

The prescribed burn areas delineated on Map 1, show areas which could be burned to meet the AMP goals/objectives. Actual burns will be designed to result in a mosaic of burned and unburned vegetation within the delineated areas. The prescribed burn sites were selected based on the following criteria: 1) sagebrush currently provides 60% of the annual vegetation production as estimated from transect data from Ecological Site Inventory, 2) the understory of the sagebrush contains sufficient desirable grass species to revegetate the area and meet objectives, 3) the ability to contain the fire based on proximity to roads and natural topographic fire breaks, 4) size, shape and location of areas provide reasonable management opportunities to meet objectives. All prescribed burns are subject to change or elimination based on field inspection and future ID Team review to determine site-specific feasibility and suitability. Areas may be excluded from burning because of the presence of rare plants; abundance of non-native weeds (e.g. cheatgrass, medusahead); cultural or historical values; specified wildlife values (e.g., thermal or hiding cover); and/or complications with protecting private land.

Site specific prescriptions and burn plans will be developed in the future in accordance with the criteria listed above. A typical prescription will include ignition and burning conditions (ranges in temperature, relative humidity, fuel moisture, wind speed and direction), and

fire objectives (e.g. percent of area burned, percent of brush burned). The burn plan will include the logistics for burning and a safety plan.

Generally, burn areas will be rested from livestock grazing for at least two growing seasons following burning. The ID team will meet with permittees and other interested parties to determine when to authorize livestock grazing. If possible, the meeting will be held at the burn site(s). The main criteria determining when grazing could resume will be if the AMP resource objectives are being met. The group may agree on the time to reintroduce livestock grazing to the area, or the Area Manager may make that determination based on provided recommendations. Burns may be rested from livestock grazing by changing the pasture rotation during the recovery period, by temporary fencing, or additional herding. However, wildlife and wild horses may use the burn areas if they are not fenced. Some burn projects may need to be timed with wild horse gathers to avoid heavy, post-burn horse use.

Cultural and Botanical Clearances

Cultural and botanical clearances will be conducted prior to implementation of any surface disturbing project listed in this AMP. Some project locations may need to be shifted slightly in order to avoid impacts to such sensitive resources, if located during these surveys.

Use of Riders

Proper implementation of this plan will require the use of riders to move cattle between pastures (trailing), keep cattle inside designated areas, and keep cattle out

of sensitive areas.

Maintenance

Project maintenance will be assigned by cooperative agreement(s) between the BLM and the permittees. Generally, cross and pasture boundary fences will be maintained by the livestock permittees. All riparian enclosures will be maintained by the BLM. BLM will install pipelines and permittees will assume maintenance. Stock water ponds will be constructed and maintained by BLM. All other maintenance will be reviewed on a case by case basis and the benefiting party will assume maintenance responsibility.

Project List

East Side

The construction of the following fences (shown on Map 1) will form three new pastures and allow for implementation of a rest-rotation system:

- a) Nineteen miles of fence running from southern boundary at Highway 140 to Buckaroo Pass. This fence will not be constructed until such time as 1) one or more of the affected WSAs or portions thereof are released from further study, or 2) the wilderness interim management policy is revised. In the interim herding will be used.
- b) Eleven miles of fence from the Spaulding Pasture running east through Buckaroo Pass to an unnamed butte north of Shallow Lake.

The following projects (shown on Map 1)

are expected be implemented to meet vegetation community objectives, improve water distribution, protect spring areas, and to manage livestock distribution and movement within the allotment:

- d) Modify the existing exclosure fence at Spaulding Reservoir and provide pipeline to water trough away from the reservoir. About 3 miles of pipeline will be needed.
- e) Fence out South Corral Spring and provide pipeline to trough away from the spring. About 1/2 mile of pipeline will be needed.
- f) Run pipeline north from Buena Vista spring to reduce grazing pressure in the canyon around Buena Vista spring. About 1/2 mile of pipe will be needed.
- g) Run pipeline from Twin Spring to the west to relieve grazing pressure around the spring exclosure. About 1/2 mile of pipe at most will be needed.
- h) Run a pipeline from DL Spring to north to relieve grazing pressure around the spring exclosure. About 1/2 mile of pipe will be needed.
- i) Develop a new dirt tank in the drainage about a mile east of North Highland Spring.
- j) Reconstruct Rock Reservoir (about half way between Dixon Waterhole and South Corral Spring).
- k) Reconstruct two dirt tanks in the northwest corner of the allotment. These tanks are part of the Guano

Slough system and are located in sections 6 and 8.

- l) Develop a water source outside of Sagehen Canyon, either by constructing a pipeline or fencing of the creek. The creek in the canyon could be excluded from grazing except for a watertap on private land where the horses in the camp will water. Reconstruct or add to the existing check dams in the Sagehen drainage to control erosion.
- m) Prescribed burn in Hawk Valley seeding followed by reseeding of crested wheatgrass if necessary to improve the production and vigor of the crested wheatgrass seeding. The burn area is about 6,500 acres. The original Hawk Valley burn and crested wheatgrass seeding was conducted to create additional forage and an alternative livestock grazing area. Prior to the original burn there was a mixture of native bunchgrasses and shrubs. Since the area was seeded, shrubs have regained dominance, though there is a significant amount of native bunchgrasses that are also out-competing the crested wheatgrass. If the area is burned, existing native bunchgrasses could germinate on their own. However, since this project is intended to take grazing pressure off other native grass/shrub communities in the allotment during the spring and early summer, reseeding will be conducted. Crested wheatgrass will not be reseeded unless state guidelines are followed and BLM criteria for planting non-natives are met.

- o) Erosion control structures need to be rebuilt or increased in West Gulch on the south side of Beaty Butte. There are several check dams in the gulch and these may need some repair. Some new dams may also be necessary.
- p) Develop a new dirt tank in the drainage on the south side of the main road from Sagehen Camp to Acty Camp. This dirt tank will be about a mile southeast of Dixon waterhole and about 1 mile west of West Dixon waterhole (T.41S., R.29E. Section 3 NESW). The purpose is to provide an additional waterhole in the new Southeast Pasture.
- q) Build an enclosure around the Potholes from the road crossing north to the private land boundary (about 1/2 mile). This project is in Section 7, T.40S., R.29E. A water gap will be provided for livestock water. Due to the location within a WSA, this enclosure will be constructed only if implementation of the rest-rotation grazing system is not effective in meeting riparian goals/objectives. The fence will be designed to minimize visual/wilderness impacts.
- r) Install approximately 4 cattleguards at road crossings adjacent to proposed fence project "a" to mitigate for recreational user access impacts of increased fencing. Final locations of these cattleguards will be determined by confirmation of actual vehicle use patterns.

location is shown on Map 1. The proposed prescribed burn sites were selected based on the following criteria: 1) Sagebrush provides 60 percent of the annual vegetation production as estimated from transect data from Ecological Site Inventory, 2) The understory of the sagebrush contains sufficient desirable grass species to revegetate the area and meet objectives, 3) Ability to contain the fire based on access to roads and natural topography. All proposed prescribed burns are subject to change or elimination based on field inspection to determine feasibility and suitability. Areas may be excluded from burning because of the presence of rare plants, cultural or historical values, wildlife values such as sage grouse leks and/or complications with private land.

1. Long Grave Butte Burn (T.37S., R.28E. Sections 4-10, 15-18, 20-22, 27, 28). Approximately 5,500 acres north of Lone Grave Butte, the east boundary of the burn area is the main Beaty Butte Road #6176. The dominant vegetation is big sagebrush with either Thurber's needlegrass or bluebunch wheatgrass as the dominant understory grass. There are some areas of low sagebrush mixed in.
2. Mahogany Mountain Burn (T.37S., R.29E. Sections 20-22, 28-32). Approximately 2,200 acres in size east of Rock Springs camp and west of Sunrise Spring and around Dropoff waterhole. The dominant vegetation is big sagebrush with either Idaho fescue or blue bunch wheatgrass in the understory. There is also low sagebrush with the same grasses in the understory.

Prescribed burns are listed below, and their

3. Mud Hole Spring burn (T.37S., R.28E. Sections 35, 36; T.37S., R.29E. Section 31; T.37S., R.28E. Sections 1,2,11-14; T.38S., R.29E. Sections 4-9,17,18). The burn is approximately 7,000 acres. The burn is bordered on the north by the road which runs from Rock Springs camp past Mud Hole springs and down to Lick spring. The burn is bordered on the south and east by a low rim and Reed spring. On the west side the burn may extend out to the Beaty Butte Road. The dominant vegetation is a mixture of low sagebrush and big sagebrush with an understory that is dominated by Idaho fescue. All the other common native perennial grasses are also found in the area in varying amounts.
4. Rye Grass Valley Burn (T.38S., R.29E. Sections 10-12,13-15,22-26; T.38S., R.30E. Sections 18,19,30). The approximate size is 6,000 acres. The dominant shrub is big sagebrush with Sandberg's bluegrass and bluebunch wheatgrass being the most dominant understory grasses. Thurber's needlegrass is common and is the dominant grass in some small areas. There are also areas within the burn which may lack sufficient fuel to carry a fire.
5. Wilson Spring Burn (T.37S., R.29E. Section 36; T.37S., R.30E. Sections 31,32; T.38S., R.29E. Section 1; T.38S., R.30E. Sections 5-9,16,17). The burn is approximately 4,200 acres. The burn is southeast of Wilson Spring and is bordered on the east by the main Beaty Butte Road that runs north-south. The burn is bordered on the north and the south by road or by jeep trail for most of the way. The dominant vegetation is big sagebrush with either Sandberg's bluegrass or bottlebrush squirreltail as the dominant understory grass. There are areas of cheatgrass in the burn and these will have to be closely examined in the field.
6. County Line Burn (T.38S., R.28E. Sections 25,35,36; T.38S., R.29E. Sections 30,31; T.39S., R.28E. Sections 1,2,12; T.39S., R.29E. Section 57). The burn is approximately 4,000 acres. The burn straddles the Lake Harney county line extending about 1 mile east and west from the county line. The west boundary of the burn is Guano Rim about 1.5 miles east of the Spaulding Ranch. The south boundary is about 1 mile north of Spaulding reservoir. The north boundary is about 1 mile south of Buckaroo Pass. The dominant vegetation is a mixture of big sage and low sage with Sandberg's bluegrass being the dominant understory grass. Bluebunch wheatgrass and Idaho fescue are common in patches.
7. Rocky Canyon burn (T.39S., R.28E. Sections 11,15,22,26,35,36). The burn is approximately 4,500 acres. The southern boundary of the burn will be Rocky Canyon with the west border being Guano Rim and the north and east borders will be the rim above Sagehen Canyon. Big sage is the dominant vegetation but about 25 percent of the area is dominated by low sage. Thurber's

- needlegrass is the dominant understory grass with Sandberg's bluegrass also occurring often. Bluebunch wheatgrass is found throughout the site.
8. Guano Rim Burn (T.39S., R.38E. Sections 27,28,33,34; T.40S., R.28E. Sections 4,8,9,17,18). The approximate acreage in the burn is 1,900 acres. The dominant vegetation is about 60 percent big sage with bluegrass understory and 40 percent low sage with bottlebrush squirreltail understory. This burn, in addition to reducing the amount of sage and improving vegetation diversity, will also increase the amount of grass to improve bighorn sheep habitat.
 9. Stallion Waterhole Burn (T.41S., R.30E. Sections 1-4,7-12,14-18,20-23). The burn is approximately 8,700 acres in size. The burn area is north of Stallion waterhole along the Nevada border in the south and along the east border is Hawksie Walksie. The west border is a two track road and the north border is a low rim. The dominant vegetation is big sagebrush with an understory of either Thurber's needlegrass, Sandberg's bluegrass or bluebunch wheatgrass.
 10. Hawk Mountain RNA Burn (T.40S., R.31E. Sections 29-30). The approximate size of the burn is 300 acres. The burn area is in the west edge of the Hawk Mountain RNA which is about 1 mile northeast of Hawksie Walksie and 2 miles south of Hawks Valley. The dominant vegetation is big sage and bluebunch wheatgrass. The reason for this burn is to determine if the ecological condition of this small part of the RNA can be improved through burning to match the rest of the RNA.
 11. Butcher Flat Burn (T.38S., R.30E. Sections 25,35,36; T.38S., R.31E. Sections 30,31; T.39S., R.30E. Sections 1-3,10-16,21-27; T.39S., R.31E. Sections 5-7,18-20,30). The approximate size of the burn is 12,700 acres. The west border of the burn area is the Beaty Butte Road and edge of the burn parallels the road where it divides and goes north to Shallow Lake and goes southeast to Acty camp. The north border is the middle of Butcher Flat where the amount of fuel has declined to a level that will probably not support a fire. The dominant vegetation is big sage with a bottlebrush squirreltail understory. The southern half of the burn area is in late seral stage and has significant amounts of Thurber's needlegrass while the northern half of the burn area is in a mid-seral stage with lesser amounts of grass in the understory.
 12. Fish Fin Rim Burn (T.36S., R.30E. Sections 26,27,32-36; T.37S., R.30E. Sections 1-6, 8-11). The approximate size of the burn is 5,500 acres. The area is located on a bench top directly west of Fish Fin Rim. The entire boundary of the burn is the rim for this bench top. The dominant vegetation is big sage with either Thurber's needlegrass or bottlebrush squirreltail as the dominant

- understory.
13. East Gulch Burn (T.36S., R.30E. Sections 16,17,19-21,28-31; T.36S., R.29E. Section 36; T.37S., R.29E. Sections 1,2,11,12). The approximate size of the burn is 4,700 acres. The burn is located between the East Gulch Road on the west border and the main Beaty Butte on the east border. The burn parallels the East Gulch Road along the east side of the road up to the junction with the Old Military Road. The dominant vegetation is big sage and the understory changes from east to west with a bluebunch wheatgrass understory on the western third of the burn; a needlegrass understory in the middle of the burn area; and a bottlebrush squirreltail understory on the east third.
 14. Beaty's Butte Burn (T.36S., R.29E. Sections 13, 15, 20-28,34,35; T.37S., R.29E. Sections 2,3). The approximate size is 5,700 acres. The burn is located between the East Gulch Road on the southeast and the road around Beaty Butte on the northwest edge of the burn. The road between DL spring and Rattlesnake Butte form the northern border of the burn. The dominant vegetation is big sage with a little low sage in places. The dominant understory grasses vary, with Thurber's needlegrass and bottlebrush squirreltail being the most common. Sandberg's bluegrass and bluebunch wheatgrass are also found as dominant grasses in some places.
 15. Old Military Road Burn (T.36S., R.30E. Sections 8,9,17,18,19,30). The approximate size is about 2,000 acres. The burn is located north of the East Gulch Road and south of the Old Military road. The east edge is where these two roads join. The western border is the main Beaty Butte Road. The dominant vegetation is big sagebrush with bottlebrush squirreltail.
 16. Surveyor's Lake Burn (T.37S., R.29E. Section 25; T.37S., R.30E., Sections 6,7,15-21,29-31). The approximate size of the burn is 5,000 acres. The burn is located west of Surveyor's Lake with the northern boundary being the Shallow Lake Road and the road to Big Dog waterhole. The burn is bordered on the west by the road from Wilson Spring and on the south by the Wilson Spring road and the Shallow Lake Road. The eastern boundary is a small drainage that runs from the Big Dog waterhole road south to Surveyor's Lake. The dominant vegetation is big sagebrush with about half of the burn area having a bluebunch wheatgrass understory. The understory in the rest of the burn area is Sandberg's bluegrass, Thurber's needlegrass or bottlebrush squirreltail.

West Side

The following projects are expected to be implemented on the west side of the allotment and are shown on Map 1:

- A) Construct about five miles of fence will be needed along the road south

of Guano Creek to divide the existing Jack Lake pasture into two pastures (Jack Lake riparian pasture if the jurisdictional transfer is not completed/Jack Lake exclosure if the transfer is completed and Jack Lake South pasture).

- B) Construct about four miles of fence across the middle of the existing Jack Creek Pasture to create the two pastures (Corral Lake and Jack Creek South pastures).
- C) Develop a water source at the spring in Clove pasture and pipe the water from the west side of the pasture to the east side.
- D) Construct about 1 mile of fence to divide the Shirk Ranch into two pastures.

Appendix 2 - Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management (BLM, 1997)

Introduction

The Range Reform '94 Record of Decision (BLM, 1995a) recently amended current grazing administration and management practices. The ROD required that region-specific standards and guidelines be developed and approved by the Secretary of the Interior. In the State of Oregon, several Resource Advisory Councils (RACs) were established to develop these regional standards and guidelines. The RAC established for the part of the state covering the Beaty Butte allotment is the Southeastern Oregon RAC. These standards and guidelines for Oregon and Washington were finalized on August 12, 1997 and include:

Standard 1 - Upland Watershed Function

Upland soils exhibit infiltration and permeability rates, moisture storage, and stability that are appropriate to soil, climate, and landform.

Standard 2 - Riparian/Wetland Watershed Function

Riparian-wetland areas are in properly functioning physical condition appropriate to soil, climate, and landform.

Standard 3 - Ecological Processes

Healthy, productive, and diverse plant and animal populations and communities appropriate to soil, climate, and landform are supported by ecological processes of nutrient cycling, energy flow, and the hydrologic cycle.

Standard 4 - Water Quality

Surface water and groundwater quality, influenced by agency actions, complies with State water quality standards.

Standard 5 - Native, T&E, and Locally Important Species

Habitats support healthy, productive, and diverse populations and communities of native plants and animals (including special status species and species of local importance) appropriate to soil, climate, and landform.

Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management cover the following categories and are presented in detail on pages 15-18 of BLM (1997): general, livestock grazing management, facilitating the management of livestock grazing, and accelerating rangeland recovery.

RANGELAND HEALTH STANDARDS - ASSESSMENT
JULY 22, 1998
BEATY BUTTE ID TEAM

STANDARD 1 - UPLAND WATERSHED

This Standard is being met on the allotment. The indicators used to evaluate this standard are Soil Surface Factor (SSF), which documents accelerated erosion; and plant community composition, which indicates root occupancy of the soil profile.

Soil Surface Factor (SSF) is an indicator of accelerated erosion and is a method of documenting observations regarding erosion. Of the 506,985 acres of public land in Beaty Butte Allotment, 4,086 (0.8%) have an SSF rating higher than slight. A copy of the form used to document SSF is attached (Attachment 1, "Determination of Erosion Condition Class").

Another indicator of Upland Watershed condition is plant composition and community structure. Current plant composition is compared to a defined Potential Natural Plant Community for the identified soil type and precipitation zone. As shown in the 1994 allotment evaluation (page 27, BLM 1994b), Table VII, 86% of the area is in mid- to late seral stage with a static to upward trend.

STANDARD 2 - RIPARIAN/WETLAND

This Standard is not being met. Lotic site inventories were completed in 1996 and 1997. Intermittent and perennial reaches were inventoried. On the reaches on public land in Beaty Butte allotment along Guano Creek, 4.35 miles are in Proper Functioning Condition, and 5.15 miles of stream are not in proper functioning condition (2.9 miles are Functional At Risk with no apparent trend (apparently neither degrading nor improving), and 2.25 miles are nonfunctional). The team determination is that livestock use is a significant factor for not meeting this standard on these reaches of Guano Creek.

On the reaches on public land along Sagehen Creek, 2.2 miles are in Proper Functioning Condition and 0.4 miles are in Functional At Risk Condition with an upward trend. Current livestock use is not a significant factor in not meeting the standard on this reach, as indicated by the upward trend in condition.

East-West Gulch is in Functional At Risk Condition with downward trend. This stream is a "G" Channel under the Rosgen Rating System, meaning the channel is incised. In order to achieve Proper Functioning Condition, the channel will need to widen and form a new flood plain. Livestock use will neither impede nor supplement this process of developing a new flood plain. By definition, a "G" Channel will go through this process no matter what type of vegetation community exists (e.g., willows and sedges as opposed to bluegrass and sagebrush). Current livestock use is not a significant factor for not meeting this standard on

DETERMINATION OF EROSION CONDITION CLASS SOIL SURFACE FACTORS (SSF)

SOIL MOVEMENT	No visual evidence of movement					Some movement of soil particles	Moderate movement of soil is visible and recent. Slight terracing generally less than 1" in height.	Occurs with each event. Soil and debris deposited against minor obstructions.	Subsoil exposed over much of area, may have embryonic dunes and wind scoured depressions								
	0	1	2	3	4					5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
SURFACE LITTER	Accumulating in place					May show slight movement	Moderate movement is apparent, deposited against obstacles	Extreme movement apparent, large and numerous deposits against obstacles	Very little remaining (use care on low productive sites)								
SURFACE ROCK	If present, the distribution of fragments show no movement caused by wind or water					If present, coarse fragments have a truncated appearance or spotty distribution caused by wind or water	If present, fragments have a poorly developed distribution pattern caused by wind or water	If present, surface rock or fragments exhibit same movement and accumulation of smaller fragments behind obstacles	If present, surface rock or fragments are dissected by rills and gullies or are already washed away								
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14		
PEDS. TALLING	No visual evidence of pedestalling					Slight pedestalling. In flow patterns	Small rock and plant pedestals occurring in flow patterns	Roots and plants on pedestals generally evident, plant roots exposed	Most rocks and plants pedestalled and roots exposed								
FLOW PATTERNS	No visual evidence of flow patterns					Deposition of particles may be in evidence	Well defined, small, and few with intermittent deposits	Flow patterns contain silt and sand deposits and alluvial fans	Flow patterns are numerous and readily noticeable. May have large barren fan deposits.								
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
RILLS	No visual evidence of rills					Some rills in evidence at infrequent intervals over 10"	Rills 1/2" to 6" deep occur in exposed places at approximately 10' intervals	Rills 1/2" to 6" deep occur in exposed area at intervals of 5 to 10'	May be present at 3" to 6" deep at intervals less than 5'								
GULLIES	May be present in stable condition. Vegetation on channel bed and side slopes					A few gullies in evidence which show little bed or slope erosion. Some vegetation is present on slopes.	Gullies are well developed with active erosion along less than 10% of their length. Some vegetation may be present.	Gullies are numerous and well developed with active erosion along 10 to 50% of their length or a few well developed gullies with active erosion along more than 50% of their length	Sharply incised gullies cover most of the area and over 50% are actively eroding								
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
SITUATION						TOTAL											

Erosion Condition Classes: Viable 0-20; Slight 21-40; Moderate 41-60; Critical 61-80; Severe 81-100

(Instructions on reverse)

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